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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000417

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UG](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: CONGOLESE, MONUC OFFICIALS DISCOUNT THREAT OF
ADF-NALU FORCES IN DRC

REF: A. KAMPALA 577

[1](#)B. 05 KINSHASA 2103

[1](#)C. KINSHASA 389

[1](#)D. KINSHASA 411

Classified By: PolOff CBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d.

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Congolese and MONUC military officials claim elements of the Allied Democratic Forces and National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU) operating in the DRC no longer pose a significant security threat. They contend ADF-NALU numbers have been greatly reduced since joint FARDC-MONUC operations against the group in December 2005. This assessment follows recent fighting between ADF-NALU and Ugandan forces. The GOU is calling for the GDRC and MONUC to take "immediate action" against the group, saying Uganda "cannot fold its arms when its security is threatened by these negative forces operating from GDRC territory." End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Ugandan ministers protested to Congolese authorities and Western diplomats over alleged recent incursions by ADF-NALU fighters into Uganda from the DRC (ref A) following several clashes between the Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) and ADF-NALU members near the Uganda-DRC border in late March. In a diplomatic note to the GDRC, the GOU claims it killed several dozen rebels in the fighting. Minister of State for International Relations Henry Okello Oryem urged the GDRC to take "immediate actions" to end the activities of ADF-NALU in its territory. Ugandan Minister of Defense Crispus Kiyonga called on MONUC to deal with the situation as well.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Following these appeals, Francis Butagira, Uganda's Permanent Representative to the UN, sent a letter April 5 to the UNSC stating the GOU viewed the recent fighting "with a lot of concern." The letter charges that both the GDRC and MONUC have done "nothing" to deal with "negative forces" on DRC soil. Butagira warned that Uganda "cannot remain silent or fold its arms when its security is threatened" by groups such as ADF-NALU.

[1](#)4. (C) DRC military and defense officials told us they do not view ADF-NALU as a threat to security, and viewed Uganda's demands as the "real threat." Vice Minister for National Defense Nelson Paluku, a native of North Kivu province where ADF-NALU elements are located, said April 6 he did not consider the group particularly dangerous or a priority for the military. Likewise, FARDC 8th Military Region (North Kivu) Deputy Commander Col. Delphin Kahimbi told PolOff during a February visit to Goma that ADF-NALU was not among

the military's more pressing security concerns in the province. Paluku added that ADF-NALU no longer has many members, as its ranks were decimated or chased out of the DRC following joint FARDC-MONUC operations in December 2005 (ref B). He said he considered Uganda's pronouncements as an attempt to interfere in Congolese affairs.

¶5. (C) MONUC officials similarly downplayed the influence and strength of ADF-NALU. MONUC Chief Intelligence Officer Lt. Col. George Coutts told us April 9 that ADF-NALU has perhaps 500 to 1,500 fighters in the Grand Nord region of North Kivu, northeast of Beni toward the borders with Uganda and Ituri District. He confirmed FARDC assessments that the group took heavy losses in the December 2005 fighting and has not been particularly active since. He said most of the group's members now engage in petty theft and extortion, but otherwise do not threaten the local population. Coutts added that as many as two-thirds of ADF-NALU members are believed to be Congolese.

¶6. (C) MONUC North Kivu Brigade Chief Intelligence Officer Colonel Mallik told us April 9 MONUC military observers in the Grand Nord have reported only sporadic movements of small groups (10-15 people) of suspected ADF-NALU members over the past two months, none of them particularly threatening. He said the region as a whole is now actually more stable, as many of those displaced in the December 2005 fighting are returning to their homes. Mallik said an early April assessment mission in the Grand Nord found that nearly 75 percent of the 11,000 estimated displaced families in the area have returned home.

¶7. (C) Comment: ADF-NALU forces have not posed a credible threat to Congolese or Ugandan interests since the group took

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heavy losses in December 2005. While Congolese officials would downplay the potential danger the group poses because the FARDC lacks the capability to eliminate it, MONUC's assessment of ADF-NALU's relative weakness appears more reliable and accurate. GOU pronouncements indicate that Kampala thinks otherwise. Some Congolese authorities, who of course have their own agendas, claim that Uganda's recent sabre-rattling may be connected to: the Group of Experts' investigation into Ugandan arms trafficking; the discovery of Ugandan-supplied weapons in an arms cache belonging to former Vice President Jean-Pierre Bemba (ref C); the disarmament of Ituri's militias (ref D), long believed to have been supported by certain Ugandan actors outside GOU control. End comment.

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